

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
S/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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O 070124Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA
NSC

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 6

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 6, 1978.
FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS THOMAS RESTON.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS OR
THE STATE OF ATHERTON'S TALKS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND
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SPECIFICALLY WHETHER HE IS DISCUSSING RESOLUTION 242 AND
THE VARYING INTERPRETATIONS OF IT WITH THE ISRAELIS?

A. I CAN GIVE YOU SOMETHING ON HIS SCHEDULE. AS YOU KNOW,
HE IS NOW IN EGYPT AND HE WILL GO BACK TO ISRAEL BEFORE
RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES. HE ALSO PLANS TO MEET
WITH THE SAUDIS, BUT WE HAVE NO DETAILS ON HIS VISIT AS
TO EXACTLY WHEN HE IS GOING TO GO. I THINK HE WAS
ORIGINALLY PLANNING TO GO A LITTLE BIT EARLIER, BUT THE
PERSON HE WANTED TO SEE WAS IN SWITZERLAND, I BELIEVE.
SO, THAT WAS A TECHNICAL CHANGE IN HIS SCHEDULE. HIS
PRESENT PLANS CALL FOR HIM TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON
MARCH 10TH.

NOW, SPECIFICALLY WITH REGARD TO THE SECOND PART OF YOUR

QUESTION ABOUT INTERPRETATION OF RESOLUTION 242, IT
IS TRUE THAT WE DO HAVE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITH
THE ISRAELIS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF RESOLUTION 242.
FOR INSTANCE, WE BELIEVE THAT THAT RESOLUTION APPLIES
ON ALL FRONTS.

BUT THIS IS REALLY NOT SOMETHING THAT I AM PREPARED TO
GO INTO IN GREAT DETAIL WITH YOU ON BECAUSE, AS YOU
KNOW, PRIME MINISTER BEGIN WILL BE HERE IN THE UNITED
STATES SHORTLY AND THIS WILL BE ONE OF THE SUBJECTS
WHICH WE WILL BE TAKING UP WITH HIM.

Q. EXACTLY WHAT IS THE ISRAELI ATTITUDE, AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT, ON 242?

A. I REALLY AM NOT GOING TO CHARACTERIZE THE ISRAELI ATTITUDE. I THINK YOU HAVE SEEN REPORTS IN THE PRESS ABOUT THAT. BUT I THINK THE PEOPLE MOST COMPETENT TO TESTIFY AS TO THEIR INTERPRETATION OF 242 ARE THE ISRAELIS THEMSELVES.
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Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING WRITTEN FROM THE ISRAELIS THAT ATTEST TO THEIR DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ON THE INTERPRETATION OF 242?

A. NOT THAT I AM AWARE. NOT THAT I HAVE SEEN.

Q. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF PUBLISHED REPORTS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN MESSAGES RECEIVED FROM THE ISRAELIS ALONG THOSE LINES. COULD YOU CHECK INTO WHETHER THOSE ARE, IN FACT, MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING, WHETHER THEY ARE RECORDS OF ORAL CONVERSATIONS, OR WHETHER WE HAVE RECEIVED A WRITTEN DOCUMENT FROM THE ISRAELIS STATING THEIR INTERPRETATION OF 242?

A. YES. I WILL CHECK THAT.

Q. ON THIS ISSUE, YOU SAY IT APPLIES TO "ALL FRONTS." WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT? DO YOU MEAN THE GAZA STRIP AND THE WEST BANK?

A. GEOGRAPHICALLY.

Q. I SEE. DOES THAT MEAN WE BELIEVE IT APPLIES TO ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES?

A. NOW I WANT TO BE CAREFUL HERE BECAUSE THIS WORD "ALL" IS A TRICKY WORD, AS YOU KNOW. WE BELIEVE THAT

IT APPLIES ON ALL FRONTS AND BY THAT I AM TALKING ABOUT THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS.

Q. BUT YOU DON'T MEAN THAT IT MEANS THAT THE ISRAELIS
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SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORY; DO YOU?

A. NO. I AM NOT SAYING THAT. ABSOLUTELY NOT.

Q. IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR GOVERNMENT AND THE

ISRAELIS ON 242 TO BE APPLICABLE ON ALL FRONTS FOR A FULL WITHDRAWAL OR A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL?

A. I AM NOT MAKING A STATEMENT. I CATEGORICALLY SAY HERE I AM NOT GIVING AN INTERPRETATION OF THAT CLASSICAL QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER OCCUPIED TERRITORIES MEANS ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

Q. I AM NOT SAYING ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. I AM SAYING PARTIAL OR FULL?

A. I AM NOT EXPRESSING AN OFFICIAL POSITION HERE TODAY AS TO WHAT ANY PURPORTED AMERICAN BLUEPRINT FOR WITHDRAWALS SHOULD BE.

Q. WOULD YOU SAY THEN YOU HAVE A DIFFERENT INTERPRETATION OF 242?

A. I AM SAYING YES, THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON THIS.

Q. WHAT IS YOUR INTERPRETATION OF 242?

A. IT APPLIES ON ALL FRONTS. THAT IS OUR INTERPRETATION. THAT IS WHERE I AM GOING TO LEAVE IT.

Q. TO WHAT DOES IT APPLY?

A. RESOLUTION 242, THE PROVISIONS OF THAT RESOLUTION, APPLY ON ALL FRONTS.

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Q. IT APPLIES ON ALL FRONTS FOR FULL WITHDRAWAL OR PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OR WHAT?

A. I AM NOT EXPRESSING A POSITION ON THAT.

Q. COULD YOU LIST THE FRONTS YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT, PLEASE? WHAT IS CONSIDERED A FRONT? HOW MANY SEPARATE FRONTS ARE THERE? WHAT ARE THEY?

A. I DON'T WANT TO GO DOWN AND LIST ALL THE SEPARATE FRONTS, BUT I THINK I HAVE BEEN PRETTY CLEAR HERE.

Q. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE THEN BETWEEN YOU AND THE ISRAELI INTERPRETATION? I DON'T SEE ANY DIFFERENCE.

A. I AM NOT GOING TO INTERPRET WHAT THE ISRAELI INTERPRETATION IS. I HAVE SAID THAT THE PROPER PEOPLE TO ADDRESS THAT ARE THE ISRAELIS THEMSELVES.

Q. YOU SAID THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUR INTERPRETATION AND THE ISRAELI ONE. COULD YOU MENTION WHAT THE ISRAELI INTERPRETATION IS, AT LEAST IN GENERAL LINES?

A. NO. AS I SAID, I THINK THE PROPER PEOPLE TO GIVE THEIR INTERPRETATION OF 242 IS THE ISRAELIS. I AM IN THE BUSINESS OF GIVING YOU THE AMERICAN POSITION ON THIS.

Q. BY EMPHASIZING ALL FRONTS YOU IMPLY THAT THE ISRAELIS DON'T BELIEVE THAT IT SHOULD APPLY TO ALL FRONTS; IS THAT RIGHT?

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A. I AM NOT GOING TO CHARACTERIZE ANY FURTHER WHAT I HAVE ALREADY SAID. I AM SORRY.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US WHEN THIS DIFFERENCE BECAME MANIFEST?

A. NO.

Q. AND WHERE?

A. I AM GOING TO TRY TO CHECK ON JUST EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO CHECK WHEN WE GOT WHAT WE HAVE, I WILL CHECK THAT TOO.

Q. I MEAN HOW OLD IS THIS GUIDANCE, FOR EXAMPLE?

A. THIS GUIDANCE COMES FROM THIS MORNING.

Q. WAS IT THEN IN THE LAST WEEK OR SO OR WAS THAT JUST IN RESPONSE TO THE "NEW YORK TIMES" ARTICLE?

A. I AM NOT REALLY IN A POSITION TO SAY WHEN SINCE I

HAVE NOT SEEN ANY DOCUMENTS OR DO NOT KNOW THE NATURE OF THE COMMUNICATIONK IF ANY, ON THIS SUBJECT MATTER. I AM JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO GIVE YOU A TIME THING ON IT.

Q. SINCE THIS RESOLUTION 242 WAS INTRODUCED IN NOVEMBER 22, 1967, AND IT CALLED FOR ISRAELI ARMED FORCE WITHDRAWAL FROM ARAB OCCUPIED TERRITORIES IN THE RECENT CONFLICT, REFERRING TO THE SIX-DAY WAR IN 1967, WOULD YOU AGREE WITH THAT--A WITHDRAWAL FROM ARAB OCCUPIED TERRITORIES? SO WE ARE CALLING FOR A FULL WITHDRAWAL FROM ARAB OCCUPIED TERRITORIES?

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A. NO. REALLY I AM NOT MAKING A STATEMENT ON THAT SUBJECT.

Q. THERE IS A REPORT TODAY SAYING THAT DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN IS GOING TO COME HERE TO ASK THE DEPARTMENT TO GRANT ISRAEL THE FULL REQUEST FOR THE PLANES. IS THE DEPARTMENT WILLING TO RECONSIDER ITS FIGURES FOR ISRAEL OR TO ALLOCATE IT TO NEXT YEAR'S MILITARY DELIVERIES?

A. I DON'T THINK I CAN REALLY BE TOO HELPFUL TO YOU THERE. THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE INVITED THE ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER TO VISIT THE U.S. AND HE WILL BE IN WASHINGTON MARCH 7TH TO 9TH. QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT. WE EXPECT THAT THE PROPOSED AIRCRAFT SALE WILL BE DISCUSSED, BUT WE CANNOT PREDICT WHAT PRIME MINISTER WEIZMAN WILL HAVE TO SAY.

Q. MAJORITY LEADER BYRD ON SATURDAY SAID THAT HE HAD INFORMED THE ADMINISTRATION THAT HE WOULD LIKE THE FORMAL NOTIFICATION ON THE PACKAGE SALE TO BE DEFERRED UNTIL AFTER THE SENATE HAD COMPLETED ITS DEBATE ON THE PANAMA TREATIES. IS THIS ACCEPTABLE TO THE ADMINISTRATION?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT FOR YOU WITH REGARD TO SENATOR BYRD'S REQUEST.

Q. WOULD YOU CHECK ON THAT?

A. YES SIR. OF COURSE.

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Q. THERE ARE REPORTS NOW THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE

STOPPED SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN THE WEST BANK -- ON WEIZMAN'S ORDERS. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT? AND WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISRAELI ATTITUDE ON SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY?

A. I LITERALLY HAVE NOTHING ON THAT FOR YOU.

Q. WELL IS THIS A POINT OF DISAGREEMENT STILL BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES?

A. I REALLY HAVE NOTHING TO OFFER ON THAT QUESTION

TODAY. I REALLY DON'T. SORRY.

Q. PRIOR TO THE 1967 WAR, DID THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZE THE ISRAELI BOUNDARIES, OR DID
THEY NOT?

A. I DON'T KNOW THAT FAR BACK.

Q. COULD YOU NAME THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BY ISRAEL?

A. NO. I WAS ASKED THAT QUESTION EARLIER AND
I SAID, "LOOK, I AM NOT GOING TO GO DOWN A LIST . . ."

Q. NO, NO, I WAS NOT ASKING ABOUT THE FRONTS. I AM
ASKING ABOUT THE TERRITORIES THAT ARE OCCUPIED.

A. I INTERPRET THE QUESTION AS BEING SOMEWHAT THE
SAME.

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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